

The aperture and its closure in an Ordovician conulariid

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The conulariids, an enigmatic fossil group believed to be of cnidarian (scyphozoan) affinity, have four-sided, acutely pyramidal exoskeletons terminated in apertural closures. To date, three main closure types have been recognised in conulariids (plicated, triangular lappets, and lobate lappets) but the first type is poorly illustrated in the literature. Here we present the first photographic illustration of an unequivocal plicated closure in *Metaconularia? anomala*, based on study of the rich (1700+ specimens) material from the Upper Ordovician of the Prague Basin. This closure is formed by inwardly folded, triangular lappets centred on each of the four faces, with kite-shaped elements centred on the four corners forming a webbing between the lappets. Plicated closures were evidently rare in conulariids and restricted to a few Ordovician species.

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